

May 2008 – Physical Fitness Month, National Nurses Week

Each month, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) identifies general themes which coincide with the scope and vision of the Department's boards and bureaus. You can view a full listing of events that the DCA will be attending, many of which correspond with the theme of the month, on our [Outreach Events Calendar](#).

Physical Fitness Month

Physical fitness is defined as the body's ability to function efficiently and effectively in work and leisure activities, to be healthy, to resist diseases, and to meet emergency situations. As technology automates more and more of our daily physical activity, it is vitally important that all Californians make an effort to exercise and remain physically fit.

Physical therapy is a healthcare profession concerned with prevention and management of movement disorders arising from conditions and diseases occurring throughout the lifespan. Physical therapy is performed by either a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant acting under the direction of a physical therapist.

The Department of Consumer Affairs regulates and licenses physical therapists in the State of California through the [Physical Therapy Board](#). The Board's mission is to protect the public from the incompetent, unprofessional, or criminal practice of physical therapy. It provides three principal types of consumer services: [verification of education and background prior to licensure](#), [information about physical therapists and physical therapist assistants](#), and [investigation of complaints against physical therapists and physical therapist assistants](#).

Choosing the right physical therapist, with an expertise in your area of injury, is an important step on the path to recovery. The American Physical Therapy Association has an extensive database which can help you [find a physical therapist](#). You can verify a physical therapist's license on the Physical Therapy Board's Web site by clicking [this link](#). If you have received substandard treatment or if you feel your physical therapist is operating without a license, you can file a consumer complaint through [DCA's on-line complaint process](#).

Before you can be treated by a physical therapist, you must receive a diagnosis from a health care practitioner. The Department of Consumer Affairs stresses the importance of only working with licensed professionals. To find out if your health care professional is licensed with the State of California, [click here](#). The DCA's [Medical Board](#) is also an excellent resource for finding and learning about Physicians.

National Nurses Week

National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6, also known as National Nurses Day, through May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

Nursing can be described as both an art and a science. It is a profession that embraces dedicated people with varied interests, strengths and passions because of the many opportunities it offers. Nurses' work in a hugely diverse variety of settings, such as emergency rooms, clinics, and shelters for the homeless or displaced. They also fill many roles – from staff nurses to educators, from nurse practitioners to nurse researchers. Wherever they are, and whatever their role, the passion which they serve their profession, and their strong commitment to patient safety, make them truly invaluable.

Today's nurses must have the strength to care for patients during times of disaster and crisis; the commitment to remain involved in continuing education throughout their careers; and the compassion to provide hands-on patient care at the bedside – as they have done throughout the centuries. Moreover, at 2.9 million strong, nurses represent the largest group of health care workers in America. That is why it is important to take time out during National Nurses Week to thank nurses for what they do and to remind the public just how vital our nation's nurses are to patients, their families and society.

The Department of Consumer Affairs is proud to [host the California Board of Registered Nursing](#), which regulates the practice of registered nursing and certified advanced practice nurses in order to protect the public. The Board's primary goal is to protect the health and safety of consumers, while promoting quality registered nursing care here in California. The board has several important online publications. Click here to view the [Pandemic Preparedness Tip sheet](#). Visit this link for [General Disaster Response Information](#).